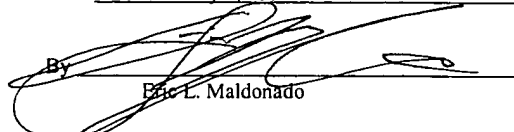


Filed Via Express Mail

Rec. No.: EV 332244237US

On : January 7, 2004

By   
Eric L. Maldonado

Any fee due as a result of this paper, not covered by an enclosed check, may be charged on Deposit Acct. No.50-1290.

Attorney Docket No. NECL 20.514 (100806-00218)

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Inventor: Koichiro HIRAO  
Serial No.: 10/619,679  
Filed: July 14, 2003  
Title: IMAGE ENCODING APPARATUS...  
Examiner:  
Art Unit: 2621

January 7, 2004

Director of the U.S. Patent and  
Trademark Office  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

S I R:

In order to comply with discretionary rules 37 CFR §§1.97 and 1.98, attached hereto is a copy of Form PTO-1449 and copy of the document listed thereon. This document contains information in which the Examiner may consider to be important in deciding whether to issue a patent in the instant application.

As this statement is being filed prior to issuance of a first Office Action, no fee is due.

Also attached is a copy of an International Search Report dated December 3, 2003 from the corresponding International Patent Application. The document listed in Form PTO-1449 appears in the International Search Report.

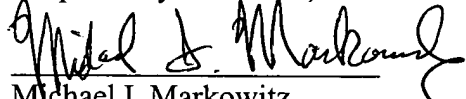
Each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this information disclosure statement.

The present Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted in compliance with 37 §CFR 1.56 as an Examiner might consider any cited document important in deciding whether to allow the application to issue as a patent, but the citation of each document is not to be construed as an admission that such document is necessarily relevant or prior art. No representation is intended that the cited documents represent the results of a complete search, and it is anticipated that the Examiner in the normal course of examination, will make an independent search and will determine the best prior art consistent with 37 CFR 1.104 (a), and in the course of such search will review for relevance every document cited on the attached form even if not initialed.

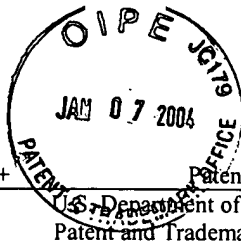
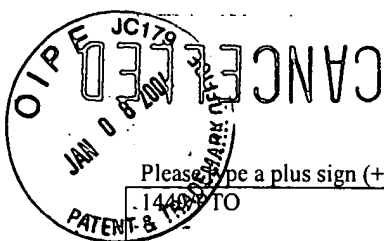
Early and favorable consideration is respectfully solicited.

**Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.**

Respectfully submitted,

  
Michael I. Markowitz  
Reg. No. 30,659

Katten Muchin Zavis Rosenman  
575 MADISON AVENUE  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022-2585  
(212) 940-8800  
DOCKET NO.: NECL 20.514 (100806-00218)



Please type a plus sign (+) → +

Patent and Trademark Office U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

14498 TO  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
Patent and Trademark Office

Application No. : 10/619,679

Filing Date : July 14, 2003

First Named Inventor: K. HIRAO

Group Art Unit : 2621

Examiner Name :

Attorney Docket No. : NECL 20.514

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE  
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**

Sheet 1 of 1

**U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**

Examiner Initials	Cite No. <sup>1</sup>	U.S. Patent Document	Kind Code if known <sup>2</sup>	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Date of Publication of Cited Document MM-DD- YYYY	Pages, Columns Lines Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
		2002/0107669		CHEN	08/08/2002	

**FOREIGN DOCUMENTS**

Examiner Initials	Cite No. <sup>1</sup>	Foreign Patent Document Office <sup>3</sup> Number <sup>4</sup> Kind Code <sup>5</sup> (if known)	Country	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Date of Publication of Cited Document MM-DD-YY/Y	Pages, Columns Lines Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear

**Other Prior Art-Non Patent Literature Documents**

Examiner Initials	Cite No.	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc.), data, page(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, country, where published, source.	Applicant check here if English language translation attached
Examiner Signature		Date Considered	

Examiner: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw a line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

<sup>1</sup>Unique citation designation number. <sup>2</sup>See attached Kinds of U.S. Patent Documents. <sup>3</sup>Enter Office that Issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). <sup>4</sup>For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. <sup>5</sup>Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.1<sup>6</sup> if possible. <sup>6</sup>Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached.

Burden Hour Statement: This form is estimated to take 2 hours to complete. Time will vary depending upon the needs of the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you are required to complete this form should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231.